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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
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FOR INR/B AND AF/C

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR

TEXT

TAGS: PINR, CF
SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC REPORT - JEAN-MARTIN MBEMBA,
- MINISTER OF JUSTICE, KEEPER OF THE SEALS,
- IN CHARGE OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM

1. (U) MBEMBA WAS APPOINTED TRANSITION GOVERNMENT PRIME MINISTER BY ANDRE MILONGO JUNE 15. A LAWYER BY PROFESSION, MBEMBA IS SECRETARY GENERAL AND EFFECTIVE LEADER OF THE "UNION FOR PROGRESS" (UP) PARTY SINCE IT WAS CREATED IN LATE 1990.

2. (U) MBEMBA WAS BORN AUGUST 13, 1940 IN BRAZZAVILLE. HE DID PRIMARY SCHOOL AND MOST OF HIS SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN BRAZZAVILLE, COMPLETING SECONDARY SCHOOL IN NANCY, FRANCE IN 1963. HE BEGAN LAW STUDIES IN NANCY IN 1964, OBTAINING A LAW DEGREE IN 1968. HE CONTINUED HIS STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS THROUGH 1973, ALTHOUGH THE ONLY FURTHER UNIVERSITY DEGREE OBTAINED WAS A "HIGHER EDUCATION DIPLOMA" (DIPLOME D'ETUDES SUPERIEURES) IN POLITICAL SCIENCE IN 1970. HE WAS ADMITTED TO THE PARIS BAR IN 1969, OBTAINING A DEGREE IN 1970 FROM THE PARIS "INSTITUT DU BARREAU". AFTER PRACTICING LAW IN FRANCE, MBEMBA BECAME A PRACTICING

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LAWYER IN BRAZZAVILLE IN 1975. IN 1987, HE WAS ELECTED SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CENTRAL AFRICA UNION OF LAWYERS.

3. (U) ACCORDING TO HIS OWN BIOGRAPHY, MBEMBA WAS INVOLVED IN SEVERAL LEGAL CASES OF PARTICULAR SENSITIVITY IN CONGO'S HISTORY, INCLUDING THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT NGOUABI, AND BOMB ATTACKS AGAINST THE BRAZZAVILLE AIRPORT AND "STAR CINEMA IN 1986. MBEMBA ALSO STATES THAT HE HAD INVOLVEMENT IN THE TRIAL OF **KLAUS BARBIE** IN LYON (1987), ABDOULAYE WADE IN DAKAR (1988), AND YONDO BLACK IN YAOUNDE (1990). MBEMBA HAS NOT HELD ANY PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT POSITION.

4. (C) MBEMBA HAS LONG BEEN KNOWN AS ONE OF CONGO'S LEADING JURISTS. DURING THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE, HIS LEGAL OPINIONS REGARDING VARIOUS MATTERS WERE NOT ALWAYS ACCEPTED, BUT HE WAS ALWAYS ACCORDED A RESPECTFUL HEARING. UNLIKE MANY OF CONGO'S CURRENT POLITICAL LEADERS, HE IS NOT "TAINTED" AS A PAST LEADER OF THE CONGO LABOR PARTY (PCT); HOWEVER, HE IS WIDELY PERCEIVED AS BEING A PROMINENT PART OF THE "OLD SCHOOL" OF CONGO POLITICS. NEITHER HE NOR HIS PARTY LEADERS HAVE SPOKEN MUCH ABOUT A RANGE OF CURRENT PROBLEMS FACING THE CONGO, INCLUDING THE ECONOMY, PREFERRING TO STAY WITHIN THEIR AREA OF EXPERTISE OF LEGAL ISSUES.

5. (LOU) ONE OF MBEMBA'S PARENTS IS FROM BRAZZAVILLE'S POOL REGION, THE OTHER FROM THE MORE NORTHERN PLATEAUX. WITH ITS OWN BIRTH IN BRAZZAVILLE, MBEMBA IS USUALLY KNOWN AS BEING FROM THE POOL; HOWEVER, HE HAS MADE SOME RECENT STATEMENTS IMPLYING A CLAIM ON THE PLATEAUX AS HOME, PERHAPS TO BALANCE THE IMPRESSION OF POOL DOMINATION OF THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION.

6. (U) MBEMBA WAS MARRIED IN 1971 IN FRANCE. HE IS THE FATHER OF 8 CHILDREN. PHILLIPS

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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